Wednesday 6th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

I am so sorry to be writing to you again to inform you, formally, that we have been instructed by the Government to close the school to all pupils other than:

* The children of critical workers <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>.
* Those children with an allocated social worker
* Those children with an Education and Health Care Plan

This is a situation I most sincerely believed we would never face again after last year. I was incredibly proud of the way students, staff and parents worked together to ensure we were a safe school throughout last term. We avoided sending home bubbles, year groups or indeed significant numbers of pupils. This ensured your child was receiving the education they have a right to and truly deserve.

Home Learning

All students will be learning ‘remotely’, which means they will learn from home and access our online portal The Kenton Learning Zone – link here;

<https://www.kenton.newcastle.sch.uk/kenton-learning-zone>

Based on feedback from both pupils and parents there is an acknowledgement that the quality of work in this area has further improved since the summer. As with the last lockdown we will seek out views from pupils and parents as to how the home learning process can be improved. But as ever any further feedback is welcomed.

Communication with home

You should all receive ***at least one*** phone call each week to check on your child’s welfare and make sure they have access to home learning work.  This may be from your child’s Year Leader or from their Tutor.

Please inform the school if you do not receive these calls on administration@kenton.newcastle.sch.uk When you see a withheld number please note that it is likely to be the school contacting you. Pupils in Year 11 will also receive phone calls from their Year 11 subject teachers regularly, again please contact the school if this does not happen

As with the previous lockdown, we have adapted the school phone line: (0191) 214 2200 to convert voicemails to an email. Your voicemail will be picked up and responded to, please do not hesitate to get in touch over the next half term, on any aspect of school related business and we will endeavour to reply promptly.

Exams

We are learning about the changes to exams as you do.

Post 16 and Year 11 BTEC Examinations held this half-term are going ahead, please follow the guidance given by Mr Ord and Mr Robinson.

As for A level and GCSE exams we have learnt from the same government announcements you have heard that there is an intention to test a pupil’s progress differently this year, in essence these examinations appear to have been cancelled. However, to be clear, we do not know what will replace these exams. Please, and I cannot stress this enough, ensure that if your child was due to undertake exams this year they complete all work set within the KLZ and check their emails daily for advice and guidance from Mr Ord and Mr Robinson. We will update you as and when we have information

Free School Meals

If your child is eligible for Free School Meals we will operate a similar system to the lockdown of last academic year, so we will allocate vouchers to families for the week. This will be via the WONDE scheme.

Kenton School Facebook Page

If you don’t already follow the school Facebook page, please can I ask that you do. We have found from past experience this was a great format for celebrating the work your child was completing whilst at home and it proved crucial in fostering a virtual school community.

To reiterate from previous letters, be assured we will continue to work with Newcastle City Public Health and Newcastle Local Authority as we have done since March 20th. 2020. I am confident that we will be able to minimise the disruption to your family and to your child’s learning by further consolidating the partnership between home and school.

Finally, I am a parent of a child who is now home learning, I know the challenges this poses and I am certain I will share similar concerns that you have about your child’s progress. Please be reassured that this motivates me even more to ensure that no Kenton School pupil suffers as a result of this enforced closure and please be confident I will welcome all pupils back as soon as the Government informs me it is safe to do so.

Yours sincerely



S Holmes-Carne
Principal